



Ronald D. Dodge

August 4, 1941 - July 17, 2025

Ronald D. Dodge, 83, of Manteno, IL, passed away on July 17, 2025, at Riverside Hospital in Kankakee, IL.

He was born on August 4th, 1941 in Peoria, IL, to Robert and Darlene (Witherspoon) Dodge. He grew up in Moline, IL, before marrying the love of his life, Gale K. Gillenwater, on December 21, 1960, in Lacon, IL.

Ron was a dedicated educator and coach, touching the lives of countless students and athletes throughout his career. He taught Social Studies at Galesburg High School from 1964 to 1967, also serving as an assistant wrestling coach. In 1967, he made his home in Manteno, where he spent the remainder of his career. He taught Social Studies and later served as the district librarian until his retirement in 1999. During his time in Manteno, he also coached wrestling from 1967 to 1985, girls' track from 1985 to 1999, and cross-country and volleyball. His passion for helping young people succeed extended beyond the classroom, where he impacted the lives of many students and athletes.

Ron's contributions to both his community and the broader Illinois region were nothing short of remarkable. With a passion for service, he dedicated his life to improving the lives of others. In addition to his extensive work in education, he was a steadfast member of local governance, serving as a trustee on the Manteno Village Board for nearly a decade, first from 1986 to 1994 and again

from 1997 to 2002. His commitment to public service continued as he served on the Kankakee County Board from 2010 to 2014, where his leadership and compassion made a significant impact.

Ron's dedication to those in need extended far beyond local politics. His long-time involvement with Illinois Special Olympics, spanning nearly 35 years, touched countless lives. As an Area Director, Director of the Illinois Special Olympics State Softball Tournament, and umpire at the Minneapolis Special Olympics World Games, he demonstrated an unwavering commitment to inclusion and athleticism for individuals with disabilities. In recognition of his exceptional volunteer work, Ron and his wife, Gale, were honored as Volunteers of the Year in 2004.

Additionally, Ron's heart for service led him to advocate for individuals at the Shapiro Developmental Center, providing support and a voice for those who needed it most.

Ron's love for his community was recognized when he was named Manteno Citizen of the Year in 2022. He was also an active member of the Manteno United Methodist Church, serving in a variety of roles over the years.

A true lover of life's simple pleasures, Ron had a deep fondness for dogs, woodworking, puzzles, camping, and was an avid NASCAR fan. One of his favorite routines was spending his early mornings at McDonald's, enjoying coffee and conversation with his buddies. He was also passionate about collecting die-cast cars and antique toys. In addition, he served as a Boy Scout counselor and enjoyed officiating softball, cross-country, and track events.

Ron's legacy lives on through his family: his loving wife of 64 years, Gale; his daughters, Robin Hamann and Don Snyder of Manteno, IL, and Rebecca Ganger and Robert Brouillette of Bradley, IL; his three grandchildren, Jordan

(Mark) Potempa of Oswego, Zach (Mackenzie) Ganger of Kankakee, and Steven (Vanessa) Hamann of Bourbonnais; and seven great-grandchildren, Hunter, Cayden, Briar and Graham Potempa, and Cassius, Lucien, and Savine Ganger. He was preceded in death by his parents, Robert and Darlene (Witherspoon) Dodge.

A visitation will be held on Saturday, July 26, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM at the Manteno United Methodist Church, followed by a funeral service. Memorial donations may be made to the Manteno United Methodist Church.

Ronald leaves behind a lasting legacy of dedication, service, and love. His impact on his family, students, athletes, and community will not be forgotten.

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL **26.** 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Manteno United Methodist Church
255 W 2nd St
Manteno, IL 60950-1142
(815) 468-3722

Service

JUL **26.** 1:00 PM (CT)

Manteno United Methodist Church
Manteno, IL

Tribute Wall

BH

“ *Bonnie J. Holman lit a candle in memory of Ronald D. Dodge*



Bonnie J. Holman - November 18, 2025 at 12:02 AM

JG

“ *Condolences to the Dodge family. Ron was a great educator and even better citizen for the town of Manteno.*
Jerry Grimes

Jerry Grimes - July 24, 2025 at 01:15 PM

TF

“ *The LaFond family. purchased the Emerald Garden Basket for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.*



The LaFond family. - July 23, 2025 at 11:41 AM

TF

“ *The LaFond family. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald D. Dodge.*

The LaFond family. - July 23, 2025 at 11:41 AM

JE

“ So sorry for your loss! I met Ron once with Gale, doing kind errand meeting me in Kankakee to bringing bottle caps they collected! Gale is the same kind caring person as Ron. They are two of a kind! She & I went through 7-12 grades together.

Jennefer Eldert - July 21, 2025 at 10:35 AM

CS

“ Ron was an outstanding educator, a good citizen, and a dedicated family man. His was a life well-lived. He gave generously of his many talents and was a great friend to all of us who knew him well. Sending love and sympathy to Gail and all the family, Charlene

Charlene Sexton - July 20, 2025 at 03:29 PM

PS

“ Ron was a great teacher He was Nice to all his students .i am Glad I was able to visit him in the nursing home Couple weeks ago. To Gale And family so sorry for your loss.

Patricia Smith - July 19, 2025 at 07:09 PM

PM

“ Paula McMahon purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.



Paula McMahon - July 19, 2025 at 11:02 AM

LG

“ Love, Jody Gagnon purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.



Love, Jody Gagnon - July 19, 2025 at 10:39 AM

MM

“ MR MRS sent a virtual gift in memory of Ronald D. Dodge



MR MRS - July 19, 2025 at 08:54 AM

MM

“ MR MRS lit a candle in memory of Ronald D. Dodge



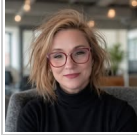
MR MRS - July 19, 2025 at 08:54 AM



“ Gary Plumley lit a candle in memory of Ronald D. Dodge



Gary Plumley - July 19, 2025 at 03:19 AM



“ *Sympathy to Mr. Dodge's family. Such a great man.*

Ann Gilbert - July 18, 2025 at 06:14 PM

BC

“ *Words fall short for expressing my sorrow for your loss. I have fond memories of Ron. I enjoyed very much his U:S:History classes, I still keep the book he gave me before coming back to Argentina in 1969. My deepest sympathie to you Gale and all the family.. Berta Calsina*

Berta Celia Calsina - July 18, 2025 at 04:16 PM

GH

“ *Gary and Cheryl Hammond purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.*

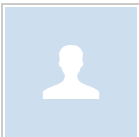


Gary and Cheryl Hammond - July 18, 2025 at 03:38 PM

GH

“ *Gary and Cheryl Hammond planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald D. Dodge.*

Gary and Cheryl Hammond - July 18, 2025 at 03:38 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.*



July 18, 2025 at 03:16 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ronald D. Dodge.

July 18, 2025 at 03:16 PM



“ *Jacque B. purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.*



Jacque B. - July 18, 2025 at 01:03 PM



“ *Jacque B. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Ronald D. Dodge.*

Jacque B. - July 18, 2025 at 01:03 PM



“ *My sincere condolences to the Dodge family. I have fond memories of Ron as one of my favorite high school teachers, he truly cared for all.*

Jeffery Cavender - July 18, 2025 at 11:38 AM



“ *He was a good man and a well-respected teacher. I still remember our U.S. History and Geography classes—he had a habit of arriving just a minute or two after the bell, keeping us on our toes. He wasn't afraid to share his faith, and he did so with sincerity and conviction. He often argued the contrarian position, causing us to think critically.*

John Milton - July 18, 2025 at 11:07 AM

LS

Gosh such a good teacher always liked his class. Steve and i send our respect to his family

Lunmetta smith - July 18, 2025 at 01:07 PM

AW

Good People will be missed.

Alice Wasson - July 22, 2025 at 10:50 AM

FR

“ *My condolences to the family. He was one of my favorite teachers*

Francis Reick - July 18, 2025 at 10:47 AM

PJ

Gale I'm so sorry about Ron's death. My thought and prayers are with you and your family. Take care.

Pam Johnson

Pam Johnson - July 18, 2025 at 12:27 PM

JB

Thinking of you GALE WITH THOUGHTS ND PRYERS JACQUE BROWN

Jacque BROWN - July 18, 2025 at 12:53 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Ronald D. Dodge.*



July 18, 2025 at 10:37 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ronald D. Dodge.

July 18, 2025 at 10:37 AM



“ My Condolences to the family.RIP Mr Dodge.



Renee Hoots - July 18, 2025 at 10:11 AM